

## **Reactions of Other African Countries to Creation of OCAM.**

A new Joint African and Malagasy Organization—*Organisation commune africaine et malgache* (OCAM)—was founded on Feb. 12, 1965, at a conference at Nouakchott, Mauritania, receiving the initial adherence of 13 French-speaking African States and Madagascar and replacing the *Union africaine et malgache de cooperation economique* (UAMCE) set up in 1964 [see 20191 A].

The conference, opened on Feb. 10 by President Ould Daddah of Mauritania, was officially described as a "meeting of the Heads of State of French-speaking Africa," any reference to the UAMCE being omitted because four members of the old U.A.M.—Ivory Coast, Niger, Upper Volta, and the Central African Republic—had never joined the UAMCE, being opposed to the dropping of the U.A.M.'s political aims[see 20191 A].

The 13 countries represented, by Heads of State or other delegates, were: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Dahomey, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo, and Upper Volta. Although no representative of Rwanda attended, the Rwandese Government subsequently signified its adherence to the OCAM charter drawn up at the conference.

President Ould Daddah spoke in his opening address of the "grave difficulties" experienced by the Organization for African Unity in the face of the conflicts between African countries, but strongly emphasized that the new organization must neither damage the O.A.U. nor supersede existing or planned regional economic groupings.

The agreement on the establishment of OCAM was announced at the end of the conference on Feb. 12, M. Ould Daddah being elected president of the new organization, with responsibility for ensuring its working until a further conference to be held at Tananarive (Madagascar) in January 1966, at which the organization would be made fully operative. The aims of the new organization were explained in the following communique, which also promised aid to the legal Government of Congo (Leopoldville), condemned the alleged Ghanaian support for subversion in other countries, and gave a covert warning against Chinese attempts to penetrate Africa.

"The now Organization... is an African grouping which has the aim, within the framework of the O.A.U., of reinforcing co-operation and solidarity among the African States and Madagascar in order to accelerate their development in the political, economic, social, technical, and cultural spheres. The new Organization, whose headquarters will be at Yaounde, will concentrate its activities under a single administrative secretary-general[the Sonegaleso outgoing secretary - general of the UAMCE, M. Dlakha Dleng, was appointed to this post....

(i) "As far as the African situation is concerned—considering that the malaise from which the O.A.U. is suffering arises essentially from non-respect for its charter, (ii) respect for the

sovereignty of States and non-interference in their internal affairs constitute the *sine qua non* conditions for peace and development in Africa, and nothing (iii) the situation in Congo (Leopoldville) and the intensification of the cold war by the two blocs in Africa constitutes a permanent danger for the O.A.U.'s existence and the African countries' independence; and (iv) the covetous desires by outsiders which are becoming more pronounced in Africa—the Heads of State of the Organization enjoin prudence and vigilance on all.

"They solemnly reaffirm the necessity of restoring peace in Congo (Leopoldville) by aid to the legal Government, in order to hasten national reconciliation within order and freedom, in conformity with the resolutions of the Addis Ababa [O.A.U.] conference and the security Council. At the same time they recommend reconciliation between Congo (Leopoldville) and its neighbours.

"They strongly condemn the action of certain States, notably Ghana, which offer a welcome to agents of subversion and organize training camps on their territory. They have consequently decided to bring the matter to the O.A.U.'s attention, and to appeal to the African feelings of all continental Heads of State so that a climate of co-operation in equality may replace... the present climate of mistrust and of leadership by intervention in the internal affairs of other States."

It was also agreed to invite President de Gaulle to pay official visits to all OCAM member-countries.

A month after the Nouakchott conference, Presidents Nkrumah of Ghana, Toure of Guinea, Keita of Mali, and Ben Bella of Algeria met on March 14 at Bamako (Mali), the three last-named leaders having further discussions in Conakry on March 15-16.

Although no communiques were issued, the four Presidents, as leaders of "revolutionary" African States, were understood to have discussed *inter alia* the situation arising from the strengthening of co-operation between the "moderate" States by the creation of OCAM, and the "offensive" against Ghana, which was leading to growing Ghanaian fears that the OCAM countries might boycott the conference of O.A.U. Heads of State planned to take place in Accra in September 1965.

M. Ben Bella stated on his return to Algiers that the four Presidents had been able to arrive at "a common attitude towards the manoeuvres which are appearing in Africa, inspired by imperialism and colonialism." Alleging that "the imperialist Powers" were seeking to split the O.A.U. in order to weaken African unity, he said that the Bamako and Conakry meetings should "make the African Heads of State understand that Africa's interest lies in blocking these manoeuvres."

There was no official comment on the presence at these meetings of the Algerian Army Chief of Staff, which gave rise to French and Tunisian press reports that the four Presidents had agreed on giving military aid to the Congolese rebels, whose position was at this time rapidly weakening [see 20803 A].

In a speech to the National Assembly in Accra on March 22 President Nkrumah strongly denied that he was supporting subversion in other African States.

Dr. Nkrumah declared that, while he had "irrefutable proof" that "imperialist-backed plots" to overthrow the Governments of "Congo (Brazzaville), Uganda, Tanzania, the Sudan, Kenya, and other countries" were "in an advanced state of preparation," he could "assure our brothers who met at Nouakohott that it is not from Ghana that they should expect the subversion of their regimes and threats to their sovereignty." Ghana had nothing to gain from subversion in any of the other independent African States, almost all of which had been helped by Ghana to gain their independence. Expressing regret at the present "helplessness" of the O.A.U., Dr. Nkrumah bitterly criticized American policy towards the Congo, and warned that Ghana would have to "reconsider her position" towards the Tshombe regime and those who supported it if M. Tshombe did not honour his pledge to withdraw all mercenaries.

A special OCAM conference opened at Abidjan on May 26 under the chairmanship of President Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, whose initiative had been responsible for convening it, to decide on a request by Congo (Leopoldville) for admission to membership.

The Abidjan conference was attended by the Heads of State or other representatives of nine member-countries –Chad, Dahomey, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Niger, Senegal, Togo, and Upper Volta. The Central African Republic and Rwanda, though not represented, subsequently endorsed the conference decisions. The remaining three members, on the other hand–Mauritania, Cameroon, and Congo (Brazzaville)–deliberately took no part in the proceedings, President Ould Daddah of Mauritania having unsuccessfully tried to delay the conference until June 17 and the Government of Congo (Brazzaville) asserting that the Abidjan meeting was "a violation of the OCAM charter."

The conference unanimously approved: (1)the admission of Congo (Leopoldville) to OCAM; (2) a formal promise of aid to the Leopoldville Government, it being stated that Leopoldville had not asked for military help; (3) an appeal to other O.A.U. member-countries not to aid the Congolese rebels; (4) a decision that member-countries would not participate in the O.A.U. summit meeting at Accra in September–Ghana being directly accused of complicity in an assassination attempt against President Hamani of Niger[see below]; (5) that they would, however, attend the forthcoming meeting of the O.A.U. Council of Ministers in Lagos to discuss the "summit conference" problem.

M. Tshombe, who had arrived at Abidjan for the closing stages of the meeting, expressed "profound gratitude" for his country's admission to OCAM, while M. Houphouet-Boigny said at a press conference: "The Congolese rebellion subsists thanks only to the criminal action of certain African brothers.... We fraternally beg all members of the O.A.U. to cease all aid to the rebels who are fighting against their country."

President Senghor of Senegal stressed on May 27 that "it was President Kasavubu himself who asked for admission" to OCAM –a reference to earlier reports casting doubt on M. Kasavubu's approval of the move–and added: "In order not to be disagreeable towards the States which were not represented at the Abidjan conference, we have asked the president of OCAM, whom we still regard as the president in office, to take note of the opinion of the overwhelming majority of OCAM members, and to include the question of the admission of the Congo on the agenda for the forthcoming Tananarive conference."

President Tsiranana of Madagascar stated on May 28 that OCAM would give the Congo any help requested, except military aid; that the OCAM countries could supply technicians, administrative officials, and staff "for internal police duties"; and that they would take the Leopoldville Government's part at O.A.U. meetings.

Immediately after the Abidjan meeting President Senghor, on behalf of the countries represented, sent personal envoys to President Ould Daddah and President Ahidjo of Cameroon to explain the decisions taken. He also had talks on May 29 with President Keita of Mali, who in turn met Presidents Houphouet-Boigny, Hamani of Niger, and Yameogo of Upper Volta at Bouake (Ivory Coast) on June 13. Although no communique was issued, it was unofficially stated that agreement had been reached at the Bouake meeting on all points discussed.

The decisions taken at the Abidjan conference were, however, bitterly denounced by President Massemba-Debat of Congo (Brazzaville) and by President Toure of Guinea.

President Massemba-Debat on May 29 rejected "the 'majority' status conferred on the decisions taken in OCAM's name, when some members were absent." He contended that the admission of Congo (Leopoldville) was "fraudulent," being designed only "to rehabilitate the Tshombe Government when in fact it is for the Congolese people to choose its destiny."

In a radio interview on June 3 M. Massemba-Debat threatened to withdraw from the Organization, saying: "The attitude taken at Abidjan is such as to compromise both African unity and the brotherhood of the African peoples.... If OCAM turns to the path of conspiracy, disunity, intrigue, and cynicism, the place of Congo (Brazzaville) cannot be in OCAM.... "

President Toure, in a broadcast on June 7, declared that OCAM stood for "*organization commune africaine de menteurs*[joint African organization of liars]" and that it was "the fruit of a new mystification invented to sap the bases of African unity... for the profit of imperialism "; he alleged that the main purpose of the Abidjan meeting had been to decide on sending M. Tshombe troops and weapons. In a violent personal attack on M. Houphouet-Boigny on June 11, M. Toure alleged that the latter had been responsible for "the division between Guinea and some other African States" and "the misunderstanding between Guinea and France," and that Guinea had been subjected to armed plots directed from the Ivory Coast. He added that although OCAM was "a club of puppets," Guinea intended to "maintain and reinforce the bases for a healthy understanding" with the peoples of the OCAM countries, "in unity against the colonialists, imperialists, and puppets."

In an equally violent reply, President Yameogo on June 12 denounced President Toure as "a Head of State not fit to sit beside those who really wish for African unity," and later as a "vain, lying, jealous, envious, cruel, hypocritical, ungrateful, and intellectually dishonest man."

The Mauritanian Government on July 7 officially confirmed reports that Mauritania had decided on June 24 to withdraw from OCAM.

President Ould Daddah, in a press interview reported on July 19, explained that "Mauritania cannot form an integral part of a group of States which might... appear at a given moment as a

possible rival of the O.A.U.... or might risk harming the authority of that Organization." He stressed at the same time that Mauritania intended to retain her ties with "countries which have shown their active friendship" when Mauritania was in difficulties, and would continue to take part in joint bodies such as the *Air-Afrique* company and the Senegal River Committee[see below].

Despite M. Ould Daddah's statement, the Congolese question was generally regarded as having been a major factor in the Mauritanian withdrawal.

In contrast to Mauritania's withdrawal from OCAM, President Ahidjo stated in mid-July that Cameroon was still "at the moment in OCAM"; he expressed the hope, however, "that things will improve and that this organization will function normally," adding: "Otherwise we shall be asking ourselves why we continue to remain in it."

The Nouakchott conference was preceded by what *Le Monde* called a "diplomatic offensive" led by M. Houphouet-Boigny and the Heads of State of other member-countries of the *Conseil de l'Entente*[see below] against alleged Ghanaian and Chinese Communist support for subversive activities in a number of independent African countries.

Persistent antagonism had arisen between certain of the French-speaking Black African countries and Ghana, due partly to the presence in Ghana of exiled Opposition groups from those countries and to border incidents, and in part to their differing attitudes over Congo (Leopoldville).

**Niger and Ghana.** The illegal *Sawaba* opposition party in Niger, led by M. Djibo Bakary[see page 18133], who now lives in exile in Ghana, had on Sept. 27, 1964, issued an appeal for the overthrow of President Hamani's Government, and during October several groups of armed *Sawaba* rebels infiltrated into Niger from Ghana, carrying out terrorist attacks against Customs posts and other public buildings and killing or wounding a number of persons.

Following these incursions, the Niger authorities alleged that "two African States" and a "non-African Power" were "deliberately intervening" in Niger's domestic affairs by encouraging terrorist activity, and it soon became clear that these allegations were directed against Ghana, Dahomey, and China. While a reconciliation was effected with Dahomey in January 1965, the accusations against Ghana and China were intensified, based on alleged confessions by captured terrorists that they had received military training in these two countries (and also in Algeria) and that by mid-1964 some 150 men had been assembled in Ghana for the subsequent incursions into Niger.

**Togo and Ghana.** A border incident on Jan. 16, 1965, in which a Togolese customs official was killed by two Ghanaian officials, led to renewed tension between the two countries, as a result of which the Togolese Government stated that the frontier—which had never been fully reopened despite the relative improvement in the two countries' relations after the overthrow of the Olympic regime [see 19249]—would remain closed until Ghana had made amends.

**Ivory Coast and Ghana.** A long-standing issue between the Ivory Coast and Ghana, which had however remained quiescent for several years, was that of alleged Ghanaian support for a former

Ivory Coast chief, Amen Ndouffou III, King of the Sanwi (a territory on the Ivory Coast-Ghana border), who on the establishment of the former French Community in 1959 had sought to secede from the Ivory Coast and retain a direct relationship with France. In March 1960 the King was sentenced by an Ivory Coast court to 10 years' imprisonment for an "attempt against the external security of the State," but was amnestied some months later and went into exile in Ghana. Meanwhile, a number of his supporters had set up a "provisional Sanwi government in exile" in Ghana, with the aim of "reunifying" the Sanwi with Ghana—a move which led in turn to a public denunciation by M. Houphouet-Boigny of Dr. Nkrumah's "hope of annexing part of the Ivory Coast." The Ghanaian Government subsequently denied that it had recognized the "government in exile," but Ghana remained the headquarters of the Sanwi emigres.

**Upper Volta and Ghana.** Upper Volta—the other *Entente* State directly bordering Ghana—also had a dispute with Ghana arising from a Ghanaian claim to certain territory under Voltaic rule. Although at the July 1964 meeting of the O.A.U. Council, to which Upper Volta had submitted the question, both sides agreed to demarcate the border [see page 20253] and President Yameogo commented in September 1964 that he "regarded the matter as shelved," relations between both countries remained strained. Conciliatory moves by Ghana, including a visit to Ouagadougou in March 1965 by the then Ghanaian Foreign Minister, Mr. Botsio, were rejected by President Yameogo, who said on March 25 that there was no question of re-opening the frontier between the two countries, which had been closed since 1963.

**Cameroon and Ghana.** The Cameroon Republic felt itself threatened by terrorist activity which was organized by a "revolutionary committee" of the illegal *Union des populations du Cameroun* with headquarters in Accra. Rebel activity had, however, become limited to virtually only one area—the Mungo district near the border between East and West Cameroon—and Ghanaian support for it was thought to have become only intermittent, President Ahidjo having obtained promises from President Nkrumah that Ghana would abstain from interference in Cameroonian domestic affairs.

Hostility to Communist China had been aroused by what were regarded as Chinese designs to penetrate Africa and establish strong Chinese influence on that continent, with the possibility of setting up Communist-dominated regimes. The attitude of the French-speaking African countries towards China varied greatly, however, e.g. from the increasingly close ties between Congo (Brazzaville) and Peking to continuing friendly relations between Madagascar and Nationalist China.

Following the *Entente* meetings from Jan. 14–18, 1965, M. Houphouet-Boigny launched a strongly-worded attack on Communist China in a speech on Jan. 23, in the presence of MM. Hamani and Yameogo, who themselves took up the same theme at a press conference in Abidjan on Feb. 2.

M. Houphouet-Boigny, criticizing both China and "those who are pushing the Chinese towards Africa," said: "At Nanking they are teaching Africans to assassinate those who have their eyes open to the Chinese danger. in order to put in their place servile men who would open the doors of Africa to China. Are these people going to allow the Chinese to do what colonization could not achieve—kill the African soul? It is against this that we are fighting.... Those who are pushing

the Chinese towards Africa are making a thoroughly bad calculation, for with the help of our riches they would break out like a wave and sweep Europe away like straw. I hope events will prove me wrong. But in Ghana, at Brazzaville, in Burundi, in Congo-Leo, it is China which is present, determined and clever " Referring to the Congo problem, the President stressed the *Entente's* belief in "non-interference in other people's affairs," adding that "what matters to us is that the Congo should not be a Cuba on the flank of Africa.... "

M. Yameogo on Feb. 2 stressed the *Entente's* determination to resist "the besieging of Africa by Chinese Communism," while M. Hamani openly alleged that the *Sawaba* terrorism in Niger had been "organized, financed and directed by China, and the weapons used were bought with Chinese money deposited in banks in Brussels, Geneva, and Accra."

The campaign against Ghana was given a new impetus by an attempt on the life of President Hamani of Niger on April 13, when a hand-grenade was thrown at him at Niamey. President Hamani was not hurt, but a small child was killed and five other persons injured. The alleged assassin, Amadou Diop, was immediately arrested and was said to have confessed that he was a member of the *Sawaba* party[see above] and that the attempt formed part of a plan for widespread terrorist action with help from Ghana—M. Hamani himself confirming this allegation on April 17.

*The Entente* States, with strong backing from Senegal and Togo, immediately began intense diplomatic activity to rally further support against Ghana's alleged activities, sending high-level missions to all other OCAM members as well as to Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Presidents Hamani and Yameogo, accompanied by a Senegalese representative, personally visited Cameroon and Nigeria with the special aim of persuading the latter country to join the threatened boycott of the O.A.U. summit conference in Accra in September, which was now being openly proclaimed by the four member-countries of the *Conseil de l'Entente* as well as by Senegal and Togo. It was announced on April 27 that the Nigerian Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, had proposed a special meeting of the O.A.U. Foreign Ministers to discuss the crisis.

President Nkrumah and the Ghanaian Government, however, strongly denied any involvement in the Niamey outrage.

A Government statement issued in Accra on April 21 said that "to suggest that Ghana, while preparing to receive the O.A.U. Heads of State in her capital...., is at the same time plotting the assassination of the very leaders who will be her guests, passes the bounds of reason and common sense." It added: "President Nkrumah, who has himself miraculously escaped at least four assassination attempts in the last three years, would himself have the right to accuse of subversion the brother-States which receive Ghanaian refugees in their territory."

President Nkrumah himself cabled congratulations to President Hamani on his escape, and in a letter on April 22 expressed "shock and horror" at the allegation "supposed to have been made by you that I personally had anything to do with this incident." Claiming that "the enemies of Africa" were attempting to use the incident to "harm the success of the O.A.U. summit

conference," Dr. Nkrumah appealed to President Hamani "to get this monstrous fabrication out of your mind."

M. Hamani nevertheless repeated his allegations on April 23, saying that "in spite[Dr. Nkrumah's] of his denials, we are convinced of his guilt and anything Nkrumah may say in the face of the world does not deceive us...." Similar attacks on President Nkrumah were made by Presidents Houphouet-Boigny and Yameogo. Dr. Nkrumah replied with bitter criticism of OCAM, denouncing it in a press interview on May 16 as "an American group of African States" with a policy identical to that of "American imperialism," viz. "support for Tshombe, opposition to Communist China, and dismantling of the O.A.U."

In addition to the setting-up of OCAM, co-operation between certain French-speaking West and Equatorial African States was also strengthened by a number of other developments –some affecting existing groupings and some leading to the creation of new ones. These developments are summarized below.

**Conseil de l'Entente.** A meeting held in the Ivory Coast on Jan. 14–18, 1965, and attended by Presidents Houphouet-Boigny (Ivory Coast), Diiori Hamani (Niger), Yameogo (Upper Volta), and Vice-President Justin Ahomadegbe of Dahomey marked the restoration of closer relations between Dahomey, on the one hand, and the remaining three *Entente* members the Ivory Coast, Niger, and Upper Volta–on the other.

Relations between these countries had been seriously impaired since the overthrow of the Maga regime in Dahomey in October 1963, and also because of that country's territorial dispute with Niger; although this dispute was settled in March 1964[see 20191 A], Dahomey remained unrepresented at a presidential meeting of the *Conseil* in August.

In spite of a further deterioration in relations between Niger and Dahomey after the outbreak of terrorist activity in the former country in October [see below] –Niger spokesmen alleging that Dahomey had given support to the rebels, while M. Ahomadegbe in turn accused Niger of helping to organize subversion in Dahomey –the four leaders were able to announce at the end of their January 1965 meeting that they were "in agreement on all points examined." As a result of further Ministerial discussions between Dahomey and Niger on May 17, 1965, President Hamani and M. Ahomadegbe met on June 15 at the Niger River frontier between the two countries, formally symbolizing their reconciliation.

Presidents Houphouet-Boigny, Hamani and Yameogo had meanwhile also pursued closer contacts with a number of other French-speaking West African States, and on April 9, 1964, they met Presidents Toure of Guinea and Keita of Malt at Bouake (Ivory Coast)–the first such meeting of the five leaders of the pro-independence *Rassemblement democratique africain* (R.D.A.) since Guinea's rejection of French Community membership in 1958 and Mali's break with the Community in 1960. The meeting was regarded as part of an effort by M. Houphouet-Boigny to use the common R.D.A. background of the five Presidents as a means of restoring closer ties between the majority of the French-speaking States and Guinea and Malt, each of which, despite improved relations in recent years with their neighbours and with France, still



remained outside the main stream of French-speaking Black Africa both economically and in many major political respects.

While both M. Houphouët-Boigny and M. Senghor subsequently continued with some success to foster an improvement of relations with Mali, those with Guinea deteriorated sharply early in 1965 as a result of the latter country's hostility to OCAM, and especially OCAM's attitude over the Congo (Leopoldville); in consequence, a meeting of the four *Conseil de l'Entente* leaders with President Toure planned for Jan. 21, 1965, was abruptly "postponed" after their above-mentioned talks on Jan. 14-18.

On the other hand, the *Entente* countries established closer links with Togo, following (i) the gradual acceptance by African countries of the Togolese regime established under President Grunitzky after the overthrow and death of President Olympio in January 1963, and Togo's admission to the old U.A.M. in July 1963; (ii) the signature of Franco-Togolese co-operation agreements (including a defence agreement), comparable to those between France and most other French-speaking Black African States, also in July 1963; and (iii) the entry of Togo into the West African Monetary Union in November 1963. Togolese co-operation with the *Entente* was given a new stimulus early in 1965 by frontier clashes between Togo and Ghana, and Presidents Houphouët-Boigny, Hamani, Yameogo, and Grunitzky met in the Ivory Coast from April 9-12, 1965, to discuss matters of common interest, including the Congolese question.

**Senegal River Committee.** During a visit to Guinea on March 8-9, 1963, President Senghor put forward a suggestion for "a regional economic grouping within the framework of African unity" to comprise the four States bordering on the River Senegal—Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal itself. M. Senghor's proposal—which became a prime objective of Senegalese policy—followed (i) the development of greatly-improved relations between Senegal and Guinea since 1960, which had led to the signature of trade, payments, and fiscal agreements in June 1961; (ii) the reconciliation between Senegal and Mali, resulting in June 1963 in agreements for the resumption of normal economic relations which had been interrupted since the break-up of the old Mali Federation in 1960; and (iii) a recent improvement in Malian-Mauritanian relations, which had also previously been strained since Mauritania achieved independence.

Following a meeting of experts from the four Governments in Dakar in February 1964, a further meeting of representatives at higher level on Aug. 20-22, 1964, agreed on procedure for establishing an "Inter-State Committee for the development (*aménagement*) of the River Senegal," with a general secretariat at Saint-Louis-du-Senegal. The inauguration of the Committee and its general secretariat took place on Feb. 13, 1965, in the presence of Presidents Senghor, Keita, and Ould Daddah, but President Toure did not take part. Guinea's sudden reticence towards any close co-operation with the other three countries was attributed to her wish to avoid even an indirect link between the Guinean franc and the French franc through the West African Monetary Union.

The U.N. announced on April 19 a Special Fund allocation of \$5,000,000 for a study of the agricultural development of the Senegal River basin and control of the river for irrigation, navigation, and electric power production purposes.

**West African Free Trade Area Project.** Following a suggestion by President Tubman of Liberia in January 1964 on the possibility of a free trade area comprising Liberia, Guinea, the Ivory Coast, and Sierra Leone, and also any other interested West African States, Presidents Tubman of Liberia, Toure of Guinea, and Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, and Mr. (now Sir) Albert Margai, the Prime Minister of Sierra Leone, met in Monrovia from Aug. 20-22, 1964, to discuss a proposal made by President Tubman for the possible creation of a free trade area between their four countries and any other interested West African States. It was agreed to appoint a working committee at Ministerial level, which held its first meeting at Monrovia in February 1965.

**Equatorial African States.** A treaty to establish a Central African customs and economic union, with effect from Jan. 1, 1966, was signed at Brazzaville on Dec. 8, 1964, by the Cameroon Republic and the four members of the Equatorial Customs Union –the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), and Gabon. It provided for: (i) co-ordination of industrial projects already in progress; (ii) the establishment of a common Customs and fiscal tariff; (iii) harmonization of domestic fiscal systems; and (iv) an investment code. The organs of the union would be a council of Heads of State, a directing committee at Ministerial level, and a general secretariat at Bangui (Central African Republic). The conference also decided to create a bank for the industrial development of Central Africa, with headquarters at Libreville (Gabon).

The treaty marked a further stage in the development of co-operation between Cameroon and the four States formerly comprising French Equatorial Africa[see 18363 A]; it followed the signature of a preliminary protocol for the establishment of the union at a Heads of State meeting at Fort-Lamy (Chad) on Feb. 11–12, 1964, at which it was also agreed *inter alia* to build an oil refinery at Port-Gentil (Gabon) to serve all five countries, and to set up a joint directorate for land communications.

The Togolese Government announced on July 27, 1965, that it would reopen Togo's border with Ghana, the latter having already reopened its side of the border on March 23. Ghana had also agreed on Feb. 20 to pay compensation for the death of the Togolese customs official in the frontier incident of January [see above], but further incidents occurred subsequently and the Togolese Government announced on April 2 that two Ghanaian policemen had been detained after alleged "raids" against Togolese villages; the two policemen were handed back to Ghana on May 29.–(Le Monde, Paris)(**Prev. rep. U.A.M.C.E., 20191 A.**)